

Editorial (EURAPA 2006-1)

Heinz Mechling

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The scientific access to the field of aging has been developing tremendously fast during the past decades. It was also shown that aging and its manifold facets demand contributions from different disciplines and more and more problem-oriented interdisciplinary research. This seems to be true for basic as well as for applied research. In discipline-oriented research, there are excellent journals and publications related to the study of the aging processes. In applied research, the focus is primarily on the various forms of intervention which contribute to the delay of the aging processes and their consequences for physical functioning, cognitive state, social participation and the prevention of diseases, falls and frailty. Individual well-being and quality of life establish the objectives for interventions. Physical activity has turned out to be one of the most important forms of behavioral intervention to influence the aging processes.

During the past decade, research on the study of aging and activity, particularly on aging and physical activity, has contributed to the expanding the body of knowledge in this field of study. Orientation in theories, methods and relevant research results has become necessary. Beside the existing journals for aging, gerontology, geriatrics and even physical activity which primarily publish original contributions, there has grown a need for a review journal in the field of physical activity and aging.

Academic and tutorial reviews should provide new opportunities not only for the orientation between

disciplines before starting new research projects but also for the orientation of graduate students, practitioners and decision makers in the field. Academic reviews will yield different results from one discipline or from different combined disciplines. They shall identify white spots, prepare the ground for integrative and problem-oriented questions and stimulate interdisciplinary research.

This situation has led to EGREPA's (www.egrepa.org) decision to tackle the new journal "European Review of Aging and Physical Activity (EURAPA)". It was started on the initiative of the members of the Board of EGREPA. It came into existence with the cooperative efforts of individuals, the editorial board, guest reviewers and authors. We were proud to launch the first volume on occasion of the 6th World Congress on Aging and Physical Activity in London, Ontario, Canada in 2004. The second volume came out in 2005 on the initiative and basis of EGREPA (www.eurapa.org) as well. Although Europe appears in the title and the journal also takes into account that Europe is moving closer together, this is in no way a restriction—science is international and open!

To initiate a new journal, it is essential to have a professional basis for its further existence and development. Therefore, we addressed Springer Publishers already in 2004. Springer Publishers have shown an interest in publishing EURAPA, and negotiations could be finalized in 2005. You can see and hold in your hands the result of this process. We are convinced that this is the start of a new and successful era of EURAPA.

We would like to express our personal gratitude to Rüdiger Gebauer, President of Global Publishing, and to Dr. William F. Curtis, Editorial Director (Springer),

H. Mechling (✉)
Sport and Aging, Institut für Sportwissenschaft und Sport,
Nachtigallenweg 86,
53127, Bonn, Germany
e-mail: mechling@uni-bonn.de

for their enthusiastic support from the early beginning. Special words of thanks go to Gabriele Schroeder, Executive Editor (Springer), and her colleagues for their continual guidance and support in the phase of transition to Springer and the production of the first volume under Springer's roof. Special thanks also go to Dr. Yael Netz (General Secretary of EGREPA) and to Dr. Michael Brach (Associate Editor EURAPA) for their untiring efforts in this process.

This new era of EURAPA coincides with the EGREPA Xth International Conference "Physical Activity and Successful Aging", 14–16 September 2006, Cologne, Germany. The conference program includes the biomedical and behavioral approach comparable to the journal. These approaches are related to genetics, cardiovascular and respiratory systems, fat metabolism, degeneration, injuries and damages on the one hand and functional fitness, sports performance and 'master athletes', exercise and training, physical activity and cognition on the other hand. Also included are socio-psychological approaches, demography and epidemiology with all 'fourth age' phenomena such as falls, disability, dementia and frailty. Renowned keynote speakers from different disciplines, symposia and short communications and posters will address these topics. Participants of the Conference will have the opportunity to get in touch with the experts in the field (www.egrepa.org).

The topics dealt with in this conference also reflect EURAPA's future goals. EURAPA is oriented to respond to a variety of needs in the field of physical activity and aging. It is committed to theory, research and practice. Thus, EURAPA will contribute to extending the scope of knowledge, improve our understanding of the complex relationship between physical activity and aging. It will support clinicians, public health officers and practitioners in the field to improve decision making as well as launch campaigns and programs. These topics can also be extended to related fields, e.g. reviews of technological developments which contribute to assessing and increasing the physical activity level of the elderly or contribute to increasing security of frail and older adults at risk. Special EURAPA issues which are in planning will focus on such topics, and guest editors are welcomed to apply for these forthcoming projects.

The relevance and development of EURAPA will depend on all of us: You, as readers and authors, our editorial board members, our partners with Springer Publishers, our EGREPA members and subscribers, our coworkers and last but not the least the editors and external reviewers. The editorial staff is excited by this successful new start and is optimistic about the future of EURAPA.

Dr. Heinz Mechling
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